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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a followup of selected studies on effective schools with a population of bilingual and/or limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. Over 150 research papers on both effective schools and effective bilingual LEP instruction were reviewed. The literature was divided into three categories: (1) studies with a population including linguistically and culturally different students within a bilingual or monolingual setting; (2) evaluations about the degree of effectiveness of mostly federally-funded bilingual programs; and (3) investigations of effective bilingual instructional practices or features. It is reported that the results of a survey of 97 of the research authors demonstrate the limited extent to which the research literature recognizes LEP students in its sample populations. Implications of these findings for the planning and development of effective instructional programs for LEP students are discussed, and recommendations for future research are offered. A 38-item bibliography is included. (MSE)

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EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS RESEARCH AND LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

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This paper presents a follow up of selected studies on effective schools with a population of bilingual and/or limited- English proficient students (LEPs). It reviews the literature on both the effective school research, and the effective bilingual/LEP instruction research. It presents the findings of a survey that demonstrates to the limited extent that the research literature recognizes LEP students in it's sample population. The paper discusses the implications of these findings for the planning and development of effective instructional programs for LEP students. It offers recommendations pertaining to future research efforts in this field.

Statement of Purpose

This paper examines the literature on effective schools to determine to what extent it provides information related to effective schooling for minority language, bilingual, and limited-English proficient students (LEPs). It focuses primarily on the literature on effective bilingual instruction and other language programs designed to meet the needs of limited- English proficient students. It presents the findings of a survey that examined effective schools research and selected studies which cite variables included on the effective schools literature.

Review of the Literature

The effective school literature which provides information regarding the education of minority language, LEP or bilingual students can be divided into three categories: 1) studies with a population that includes linguistically and culturally different students within a bilingual or monolingual setting, 2) evaluations about the degree of effectiveness of mostly federally funded bilingual programs, and 3) investigations on effective bilingual instructional practices or features.

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A review of the literature revealed that a limited number of effective schools studies identify the target students in their sample population. It also demonstrated that the majority of them make no analysis of their findings regarding the identified variables and their relationship to the academic

performance of this population. The research brief prepared by the Educational Research Services, Inc. (1983) includes three of these studies: 1) Ellis (1975) research on elementary reading, 2) an early chldhood study completed by the California State Department of Education (1980) and 3) Armor's (1976) study of reading achievement. Ellis reported no specific finding and made no recommendations related to this population. The California SED study reported that there are inadequate or non-existent means for assessing LEP or NEP (non-English proficient) students, and for assessing bilingual education programs. Some findings were included by Armor in his study of a reading program in Los Angeles. He concluded that the achievement of the Mexican American student was significantly influenced by the particular school and classroom to which the student was assigned, and that the principal's assessment of the teacher was an accurate predictor of reading achievement (1976). However, this research did not discern statistically significant relationships between any individual classroom policy/input measured and academic achievement.

The second category of research studies related to effective instruction for LEP students in the U.S. consists of evaluations of bilingual programs. Much of this literature describes typologies, and designs for program administration and implementation. These studies attempt to document the success or lack of it of particular bilingual programs. The literature is rich in program evaluations that illustrate success stories (Pena-Huges and Solis, 1980, 81; Plante, 1986; Huzar, 1973; Olesini, 1971; Barik et.al., 1979; Lagarretta, 1979). While particular language programs have been shown to be effective, the conclusions generally do not indicate the effect or relationship of specific variables on the academic achievement of the LEP students. Examples include: 1) the Head Start study (LaBelle, 1979) that presented achievement gains as a result of students' participation in bilingual programs; and 2) the AIR (Danoff, 1978), and the Baker and de Kanter reports (unpublished manuscript, 1983) which presented evidence against the effectivement of bilingual programs. Of these studies, only the AIR report attempted to provide some quantitative findings on the relationship between achievement and instructional variables. While these two reports have been widely criticized for methodological flaws (Cervantes, 1979; McConnell, 1983; Garcia and Martinez, 1982; American Psychological Association, 1982), the findings have not been dismissed. Many educational researchers have taken these reports as a challenge to improve the quality of instruction and have suggested that the consequences described in these studies necessitate further research.

A Descriptive Phase Report of the National Longitudinal Evaluation of

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the Effectiveness of Services for Language-Minority Limited-English Proficient Students (1984) estimated the number of LEPs served by these programs, and provided an analytic description of the services offered. A second phase of this study, will attempt to determine the effectiveness of these services.

The third category of studies on effective instruction for LEP students focuses on classroom practices. These studies cover aspects of language instruction such as language sequence, classroom management and organization, language(s) characteristics and use, attitudes, and socio-cultural variables. Investigations on curricular sequencing of languages (L1 and L2) include support for both positions: skills developed first in L1 will transfer to L2 (Goldman, 1983), and the reverse. These findings had previously been supported in numerous studies in the field of bilingual education. Positive results in using the native language (L1) approach were confirmed in Mexico (Modiano, 1968), in Peru (Burns, 1968, 1970), and in the U.S. (Enrich, 1971; Golub, 1978). Support for L2 instruction and the transfer of skills to L1 while students progress through school have been documented by researchers in Canada (Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Barik, Swain and McTavish, 1974) and in the U.S. (Cohen, 1974). In light of contradictory findings, explanations have focused on social and linguistic factors such as the: (a) status of the language taught and the national group it represents, (b) attitudes toward L1 and L2, and (c) degree of initial language proficiency.

The review of the literature also showed that cognitive and cultural factors were found to be significant determinants of productivity and effectiveness in the classroom. Studies about cognitive factors (Cummins, 1978; Fishman, 1978; Durfey, 1971; Giles, 1977), and cultural variables (Llanes, 1976; Ramirez et. al., 19) have demonstrated that there is a relationship between program practices and the acquisition of language by LEP students. A significant study completed by Wong-Fillmore (1976) identified three factors closely related to effective classroom instruction: (1) the nature of the linguistic material from which the learners begin to construct their versions of the English language, (2) the role which social factors play in the acquisition process, and (3) sources of individual differences in the children's mastery of the new language. This study illustrated that: 1) children are able to use the new language in meaningful social settings before rule learning, (2) students must establish and maintain social contact with native speakers who can provide the help needed to learn the language, and 3) characteristics such as personality, interests, motivation, and language habits can seriously affect the ability of the learner to take full

advantage of the opportunity to learn the language in the classroom.

Fillmore's three-year study on "Variation in Bilingual Instructional Practices and Second Language Learning" attempts to determine whether or not LEP students learn English better in an all English or bilingual program. Preliminary findings revealed considerable individual differences in how well and how quickly children learn an L2, regardless of the instructional and program characteristics. This variability was observed in different types of classrooms and appeared to be related to characteristics other than the learner's intelligence and motivation. The cultural background of the students and their initial proficiency in English were found to be important determinants of the learning behavior exhibited by particular groups of minority language students. The following additional instructional variables were highlighted: quality of teaching, quality of classroom environment; quality of instructional language (input), and availability of opportunities to practice English in interactions with peers and teachers.

The bilingual intervention efficacy literature, which focuses on process data rather than achievement outcome, identifies instructional strategies of significant impact on student achievement such as direct instruction and personalized systems of instruction. Research on home/ environmental variables for Hispanic students has demonstrated that, children who come from home environments and family backgrounds offering a greater variety of stimulating experiences are those which rate high on measures believed to predict school performance. There is a high correlation between student reading in the home and academic achievement (Matuszek and Haskin, 1978). There is also a high correlation between family interaction, language used, and language development (Hart, 1983; Beker, 1977; Weder and Fowler, 1984).

Affective factors have been largely ignored in the literature on LEP students' bilingualism. Collado-Herrell and Herrell (1980) demonstrated that affective meaning is an important component of bilingualism. Hansen (1983) identified confidence in learning a language lesson as a determinant of successful language learning.

A study designed to address the characteristics of effective bilingual instruction reported findings of a three year nationwide investigation (Tikunoff, 1980). The specific variables examined consisted of: (a) staff, (b) congruence of the instructional intent with the organization and delievery of instruction, (c) program consistency, (d) time spent on learning, (e) academic focus, (f) acting teaching behavior of teachers, and (g) school and community aspects. The study demonstrated that bilingual education shares many of the

same characteristics exhibited in other effective educational programs cited in the literature. Shared characteristics reported include: (1) a strong focus on academic work, (2) a high allocation of time to subject matter content and engagement time on tasks, (3) the use of active teaching practices, (4) the expression of high expectation for student performance, (5) an efficient classroom management, (6) the congruence between teacher intent and the organization of instruction, (7) the frequency of direct factual single-answer questions posed by the teachers instead of complex divergent questions, and (8) student involvement in large group instruction rather than unsupervised independent study.

In addition, the study described above provided support for two unique and significant bilingual instructional features: the use of two languages, and the use of L1 cultural information during instruction. It demonstrated that a substantial amount of the students' native language (L1) is associated with positive learning behaviors for LEP students. The use of L1 in itself provides an influential carrier of cultural information, which in turn, allows students to work with concepts in which they have had first-hand experience. It also allows students to identify with teachers, and it reduces discontinuities between the home and the school. The use of L1 also lessens possible status differences in languages, resulting in an increase in motivation toward learning.

The sum of research evidence on effective instructional practices related to the successful achievement of LEP students points to: (1) instructional practices, both shared with effective schools and unique bilingual/second language instructional practices, (2) individual learner characteristics, and (3) home-environment factors.

Methodology

Over one hundred fifty (150) papers in effective schools and effective bilingual/LEP instructional practices were reviewed to identify successful instructional practices which address the educational needs of both monolingual and LEP/bilingual students. The review emphasized practices related to bilingual/LEP language and academic programs. In addition, 225 research authors were contacted to complete a survey questionnaire to follow up the findings of the literature review. Questionnaries were mailed to determine if the studies: (1) included non-English or LEP students in their population sample; (2)included bilingual students in their population sample; (3) considered whether schools identified as effective had non-English, LEP or bilingual students; (4) explained if non-English, LEP or

bilingual students were accounted and how, when classifying a school as effective; (5) excluded the target population for the purpose of classifying a school as effective or not; (6) established any differences between schools that reported a bilingual population and those which reported non-English or LEP students; and (7) reported language-minority students (Hispanics, Vietnamese, Native Americans) as part of the sample population. Each of the authors identified, received a follow up letter and an additional questionnaire if he/she did not answer the first questionnaire, or requested more information to complete the questionnaire. The authors selected consisted of persons who had completed studies on effective schools and authors of studies that included variables cited in the effective schools literature.

Results

Ninety-seven questionnaires (43%) were returned. One fifth (21%) of the respondents were aware that their study included schools which reported language minority students. Nineteen percent (19%) included schools that identified LEP students, and less than ten percent (10%) selected schools that reported bilingual students. Effective schools with LEP students represented eighteen percent (18%) of the respondents. Effective schools with bilingual students represented less than nine percent (8.6%). Only three percent of the studies accounted for the LEPs and one percent accounted for the bilingual students to determine whether a school was effective or not. Six percent accounted for the LEP or bilingual students to determine the effectiveness of the selected variables (s) on the instructional/educational process of the respective population. Four percent indicated that they excluded the LEP students and one percent stated that they excluded bilingual students from their study. Four percent indicated that they established a difference between schools and or classes that reported a bilingual vs. LEP population.

Discussion

These findings illustrate that only a limited number of effective school studies indentified the target students in their sample population. An analysis of the findings demonstrated that the majority of the studies with LEP/bilingual students do not account for these students, and make no recommendation related to their needs. A more alarming fact revealed is that a significant number of studies did not consider the needs of these students an area of their concern. Comments that permeated these

responses include:

- We did not collect data which could enable us to answer these questions.
- My study was not fine enough to consider some of the relevant issues you raise.
- Schools are excluding LEP students when reporting scores for school improvement projects. ... I have no evidence to back this suspicion other than anecdotal evidence.
- School district policy permitted the exclusion from testing of any student whose command of English was not sufficient to respond to the test items. This exclusion was at the discretion of the school principal.

The studies that accounted for the target pupulation stated two major reasons for it: to exclude students who did not score high enough to form part of the study or to design specific research to study the target group. The larger number of studies did not consider LEP and bilingual students an issue. It is also apparent that school districts have not established a policy regarding the exclusion or inclusion of these students when reporting scores.

Research designed to study instructional practices for bilingual/LEP students identified "shared" features that apply to schools serving mainstream students. In addition, these studies singled out "unique bilingual " features. They are: 1) the utilization of L1 and L2 to mediate instructional variables, 2) social contact with native- like L2 peers and teachers, 3) the use of L1 as a transmitter of cultural information, 4) language habits, 5) the quality of instructional language, and 6) the nature of linguistic material from which the child construes English. Significant home- environmenmtal factors include: 1) home attitude towards L2, 2) cultural/ethnic indentification with L1, 3) interlanguage use by the family, 4) reading practices at home, 5) richness of the home experiences, and 6) the status of L1. Characteristics of the learner which appear to be significant are: 1) initial level of L2, 2) personality characteristics, 3) interest, 4) motivation, 5) cultural background, 6) confidence and valued perceived in learning L2, and 7) attitudes toward L2.

Major Issues

Effective schools research in monolingual and bilingual instructional programs points to a number of instructional variables that relate to the academic achievement and language learning/acquistition of LEP students. Nevertheless, attention must be devoted to the study of additional variables

and the bilingual/bicultural perspective through the use of appropriate research techniques. These research techniques most expose the unique characteristics of successful programs and instructional processes designed to meet the needs of LEP students and second language (L2) learners. In a comprehensive review of recent research and evaluation studies of programs designed to meet the needs of bilingual and LEP students, Baker and de Kanter (1983) rejected 135 and accepted only 39 investigations. A similar review by Zappert and Cruz (1977) rejected all but 12 of 184 studies and identified the following methodological weaknesses: no control for socioeconomic status, inadequate sample size, improper sample techniques or excessive attrition rate, no baseline or camparison data, no control group, and no control for initial language dominance. They also reported significant differences in teacher characteristics and other confounding variables, and insufficient statistical information or improper statistical applications (p. 46).

Alleged deficiencies apparent in the research literature on effective schools can be identified in the majority of studies on effective instruction for LEP students. Problems identified include: (1) conceptual problems with the selection of instructional measures, (2) discrepancies with the definition of effectiveness, (3) limitations of the comparisons made to explain causality, deviation of the norm, the generalization of findings, and the importance of the relationship, and (4) problems with the plans suggested to translate research findings into improved programs outside the scope of the study.

It is significant to note that two of the effective bilingual instructional studies reported (Fillmore, 1976; Tikunoff, 1980) provided measures to account for some of the identified deficiencies in: 1) definition, 2) measures of effectiveness, 3) scope of effective instructional features, and 4) student academic, socio-economic, cultural and language backgrounds. One study (Tinkunoff, 1975) provided measures to ensure appropriate generalizations, and incorporated comprehensive suggestions for program improvement. Nevertheless, additional research efforts need to continue and expand to include:

- specific cultural and linguistic elements, and their significance as mediators of instructinal practices for LEP students;
- classroom participation structures and instructional features which are culturally and linguistically influenced;
- linguistic and culturally determined behavioral norms which influence academic achievement and language acquisition;
- instructional practices congruent with language development activities and culturally determined learning

behavior;
- achievement of higher level skills in addition to language acquisition, and basic reading and math skills;
- achievement of affective goals such as self sufficiency, positive attitudes, and ability to adapt;
- variables that demonstrate long term impact which is reflected in upper elementary and middle school education; and
- effective organizational variables and their relationship to achievement.

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